

National Parks Business Plan Process



The purpose of business planning in the National Park Service is to improve the ability of parks to more clearly communicate their financial status with principal stakeholders. A business plan answers such questions as: What is the business of this park unit? How much money does this park need to be operated within appropriate standards? This plan demonstrates the functional responsibilities, operational standards, and financial picture of the park.

A common methodology is applied by all parks developing business plans. Park activities are organized into six functional

areas, which describe all areas of business for which a park is responsible. This allows the park to move beyond the traditional National Park Service method of reporting expenditures in terms of fund sources, and instead report expenditures in terms of activities. As a result, the park can communicate its financial situation more clearly to external audiences.

Completing the business plan process not only enables a park to produce a powerful communication tool, but also provides park management with financial and operational baseline knowledge for future decision making.

Park visitors enjoy opportunities for renewal and reflection at Arch Rock in Point Reyes National Seashore. PHOTO BY KRISTIN GILLISS